

St. James Episcopal Church
Piscataway
Raritan Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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St. James Episcopal Church
Piscataway
Raritan Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey

Owner: The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of St. James
Episcopal Church

Date of Erection: 1836; addition 1913

Architect:

Builder:

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: One

Materials of Construction: Foundation - fieldstone
brick piers for portico and
supports of floor girders

Exterior walls - beveled
siding, 3" x 6" studs, stone
and brick filled; wood pilasters
at corners. Windows and doors
Tudor style. Steeple wood
framing

Interior walls - wainscoted to
window sill, plaster above with
moulded cornice

Plank flooring

Roof - pitch, slate

Historical Data:

A charter was granted to St. James Church
by Queen Anne in 1704. Services had been had before in
Piscataway so that at the arrival of the regular mission-
ary from The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in

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the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the state of the congregation warranted the granting of the charter. The first church, known traditionally as the White Church, was built in 1724. It was built on part of a tract that had been appropriated in 1695 by the proprietors of East Jersey as a burying place. This ground had been used for burial before the grant, and several tombstones bear the date 1693. This first church was designed by missionaries and showed the influence of Sir Christopher Wren. This architectural tradition has been carried on in the present church.

The British occupied Middlesex County in 1776 and used St. James Church as their hospital from December 1776 to June 1777.

The first church was destroyed by the British in 1777. The early records of the church were also destroyed.

Old St. James was a witness of a skirmish between the British and the Americans. The Scotch soldiers of the 97 Regiment, now known as the "Black Watch", were billeted in the Perth Amboy Barracks. On one of their foraging parties, they skirmished with the local militia who repulsed them at what is known as "Donahaues Hill". Breast works were dug along the entire east and south sides of the cemetery. A long trench in the cemetery was filled with the bodies of the British soldiers who died.

During the war services were broken up, but from 1784 to 1794 occasional services were held by ministers who came from New Brunswick. In 1792 the second church was built. This church was destroyed on June 19, 1835 by a tornado. The cornerstone of the present church was laid on

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August 1, 1836. The building was erected for the greater part from materials of the previous church, and completed and consecrated on May 11, 1837.

In 1913 the church was repaired and refitted.

Bibliography:

Data obtained from Reverend William Ernest Phillips, Present Pastor, by Arthur Church

Thomson, J. Earle An Elementary History of New Jersey New York, Hinds, Hayden and Eldridge, 1924

Field Book and Drawings of Survey

Walter E. Reilly
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
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Reviewed
Sept 2, 1936
THW